NEWS

Temporary return to colder weather

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After a relatively mild, if wet, week for many, there is a return to much colder weather from Friday.

There will be a lot of dry weather with some widespread sharp frosts at night and day-time temperatures will struggle to get more than a couple of degrees above freezing by Sunday.

Some snow is expected during this cold spell and there is a risk it could be disruptive in some areas. Parts of northeast Britain could see some sleet and snow on Friday, especially in upland areas of eastern Scotland and the Pennines.

Met Office Chief Meteorologist Laura Paterson said: “Snow showers will become increasingly likely across eastern England on Saturday and then there is the potential for some significant snowfall in places, particularly in the South East of England, by Sunday. Yellow National Severe Weather Warnings have been issued”.

Richard Leonard, Highways England Head of Road Safety said: “Gritters will be out treating our roads around the clock, but it is still important to drive to the conditions when snow is forecast.

“Keep your distance and reduce your speed, because even in conditions that seem normal, and where the snow is not settling, it can be slippery if ice patches have formed, or where fresh grit has not been worked into the carriageway.

“Drivers should plan their journeys, monitor weather reports and pack a snow kit of blankets, food, water and a shovel.”

The weekend will also be windy for much of the country with gales likely in places. With the wind coming from the east wind chill will be factor for many, making it feel even colder.

Public Health England have issued a Level 2 Cold weather alert for the coming weekend and Dr Thomas Waite, a Consultant in Health Protection at Public Health England, said: “The weather has felt much milder for the last week or so but this weekend the forecasters tell us it will get much colder again. And that may come as a shock to the system for some whose bodies may struggle to cope in cold weather.

"It’s worth remembering that cold temperatures – indoors and outdoors - can affect health, particularly in young children, older people and those with heart and lung conditions. So if you know someone in any of these groups, and most of us do, please keep an eye on them over the coming days make sure they’re heating their homes to at least 18C and keeping an eye on the weather forecast.”

Not everyone will see snow over the weekend and the brightest and driest weather is expected in the west and northwest of the UK. Longer day light hours, stronger late-March sunshine and a lack of existing snow cover mean the impacts of this snowy spell will be less than the late February/early March spell.

Looking ahead the weather will remain cold for Monday, but the risk of snow diminishes. As we head further into the week we begin to see a return to conditions more typical for mid March.

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